

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF PETERBOROUGH.

Annual Report

For the Year 1921,

. . . OF THE . . .

Medical Officer of Health

. . . AND . . .

Inspector of Nuisances.

PETERBOROUGH :

E. M. BARRON & Co., PRINTERS, 44, BROAD BRIDGE STREET.



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Rural District Council of Peterborough.

ANNUAL REPORT

— OF THE —

Medical Officer of Health.

FOR THE YEAR 1921.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

The Ministry of Health has issued a notice requiring Medical Officers of Health to prepare their Annual Reports according to a plan detailed in an appendix attached to the circular sent out by the Secretary. The Ministry directs that in future a Survey Report should be prepared every five years and that Annual Reports, drawn up in accordance with the plan issued should be sent to the Council, to the Ministry and to the Home Office each year. Delay in presenting this Report is due to my not having received the official figures from the Registrar General's returns until now, 28-3-22.

1. General Statistics.

AREA (acres) 35,169.

POPULATION. (R.G.'s figures) 1921. 9,530.

NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES (estimated 1921) 2,480.

(including 56 at Paston, 14 at Dogsthorpe, 12 at Eye,
14 at Werrington, since Census was taken at 4 per house).

NUMBER OF FAMILIES OR SEPARATE OCCUPIERS (estimated 1921) 2,500.

RATEABLE VALUE £85,756. ASSESSABLE VALUE £65,255.

SUM REPRESENTED BY A PENNY RATE. £271 10s. 0d.

2. EXTRACTS from VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1921.

	Total.	Males.	Females.
BIRTHS	218	111	92
		11	4

BIRTH RATE 22'66 per 1,000.

	Total.	Males.	Females.
DEATHS	99	58	41

DEATH RATE 10'36 per 1,000.

Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of, Childbirth
from Sepsis None.
from other causes Two.

Deaths of Children under one year of age.

Males 9, Females 2, Total 11.

Rate per 1,000 Births 56'87.

Deaths from Measles (all ages) None.

Deaths from Whooping-Cough (all ages) None.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) Two.

There has been no unusual or excessive mortality during the year which calls for special comment.

3. Notifiable Diseases During the Year 1921.

	No. of cases notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
DIPHTHERIA	4	1	...
SCARLET FEVER	11	5	...
ENTERIC FEVER	...	...	...
PUERPERAL FEVER	1	...	...
PNEUMONIA	9	...	...
TUBERCULOSIS	...	...	...
(a) Males	...	6	
Pulmonary Females	...	7	
Total	...	13	
(b) Males	...	3	
Non-Pulmonary Females	...	0	
Total	...	3	
ERYSIPELAS ...	...	1	
ENCEPHALITIS LETHARGICA	1 (fatal)		
OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM	1 treated at home.		vision unimpaired

Distribution of Infectious Diseases as Notified during 1921.

		Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Tuberculosis Pulmonary	Tuberculosis Other Forms	Pneumonia	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Eucephalitis Lethargica	Erysipelas	Puerperal Fever
Walton	...	2	1	..	1	2	..	..	..	..
Werrington	...	2	..	1	...	2	..	..	..	..
Castor & Ailsworth	...	2	..	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Marholm	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Helpston	...	...	1	2	...	1	...	...	...	...
Etton	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maxey	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Northborough	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Glinton	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Peakirk	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Peterborough Without	...	3	...	1	...	...	1	...	1	...
Eye	...	...	...	3	...	1	...	...	...	1
Newborough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Deeping Gate	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gunthorpe	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dogsthorpe	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Longthorpe	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Borough Fen	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sutton	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

A Tuberculosis Officer is appointed for the County Area so that a District Medical Officer of Health does not come in contact with many of the cases of Tuberculosis notified, nor can he express any opinion as to the efficiency of notification.

4. There have been no specially noteworthy causes of sickness or invalidity during the year.

The absence of any serious outbreak of Infantile Diarrhœa during the hot and dry summer and autumn was remarkable.

A special report was made to the Ministry in February with reference to the case of Encephalitis Lethargica which occurred at Newborough and had terminated fatally before the Notification was received.

5. Summary of Nursing Arrangements, Hospitals and other Institutions Available for the District.

The Rural District Council does not provide any Nursing or Hospital Accommodation, as a matter of routine, but recognises its obligation to make adequate arrangements in certain emergencies. The Northamptonshire Nursing Association provided District Nurses in some of the villages in pre-war days, the necessary funds being chiefly derived from voluntary sources : but owing to lack of sufficient support most of the local nursing arrangements have lapsed.

The COUNCIL has no Isolation Hospital, but when there is room available and if the conditions of the patient require it, the Corporation Authorities admit infectious cases into the Borough Sanatorium : when this occurs the Council pays an agreed sum for the maintenance of the patient.

Midwives are under the control of the County Council, there are 3 practising in the district.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

Maternity and Child Welfare Centre carried on by a sub-committee of the Council of the City and Borough of Peterborough.

There are no Day Nurseries.

School Clinics are managed by the County Council, who employ a whole-time Medical Officer to undertake the duties of County Medical Officer of Health, Tuberculosis Officer and School Medical Officer.

A Tuberculosis Dispensary is established at a house in Fitzwilliam Street, Peterborough, where persons wishing to obtain advice or treatment can attend. This Dispensary is controlled by the County Council and administered by their Medical Officer.

Venereal Diseases. Arrangements exist for dealing with these diseases at the Peterborough Infirmary and Dispensary.

The Honorary Staff of this general Hospital undertakes the examination of suspected cases and the treatment of those persons suffering from venereal complaints, under an agreement between the COUNTY COUNCIL and the Management Committee of the Infirmary.

There is no Maternity Hospital in the District, nor is there any Children's Hospital.

Provision for dealing with Smallpox exists, jointly with other Local Authorities, in the maintenance of a house situate near the Peterborough Corporation's Sewage Farm. A caretaker lives in the house and it is always available for dealing with the earliest cases, 8 beds are provided.

The Guardians of the Poor have an Infirmary attached to the Workhouse into which unmarried mothers, illegitimate children and homeless children can be admitted. There are normally four beds available in the maternity ward. This infirmary has about 70 beds occupied by ordinary patients needing Poor Law help.

The Guardians also maintain two Cottage Homes in which are housed children over three years of age, who are drafted on to these homes after leaving the Workhouse.

At present 10 children are boarded out with suitable foster-parents.

The Council does not keep any Ambulances, but the Borough Authorities have an Ambulance for Infectious cases, in which patients from the Rural district can be moved when admitted to the Fever Hospital under circumstances described previously.

For Non-infectious and Accident cases there is an ambulance belonging to the Borough Police.

The Peterborough Infirmary and Dispensary is the "General" Hospital serving the district, with 62 beds and 2 out-door shelters, the usual Out-patient accommodation, X-Ray Apparatus, &c.

There is a Venereal Clinic managed by the Staff.

6. Laboratory Work.

Specimens such as swabs from throats, sputum, blood, or other pathological material are forwarded for examination if sent to the M.O.H.

The Medical Officer also keeps a stock of Diphtheria Antitoxin, which can be supplied at any time to Practitioners needing it for suitable patients living in the district ; and he also keeps a supply of any other sera or vaccines issued by the Ministry, e.g., for Tetanus and Influenza.

Adoptive Acts.

Part 3 of the Public Health Act, Amendment Act, 1890, relating to Sewers, adopted for the purpose of the Bye Laws in the year 1908.

Sections 169 and 170 of the Public Health Act, 1875, relating to Slaughter-Houses. No Bye-Laws have been made thereunder. There are no Local Regulations.

8. Public Health Staff.

The staff consists of the Medical Officer and the Inspector of Nuisances, who occasionally is assisted by another man in disinfecting, &c. There are no Assistant Medical Officers, nor any specialised inspectors (e.g. food) and no Health Visitors or Special Nurses employed by the Council.

The Medical Officer is a part time official, the Inspector a whole time officer.

9. Housing.

This matter is dealt with in detail in the Sanitary Inspector's report. There are many dwelling houses in the district which are

very bad, from structural defects and lack of suitable sanitary accommodation ; but until other houses are available for the occupiers to move into, it, is a practical impossibility to remedy the defects. The question of finding alternative accommodation effectually prevents any drastic action being taken and the nuisances persist.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

HAROLD CLAPHAM,

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

ANNUAL REPORT

— OF THE —

Inspector of Nuisances, Building
and Sanitary Surveyor, Inspector
under the Housing and Town
Planning Act, 1909, and Water
Works Manager.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my (fifteenth) Annual Report for the year 1921.

Ninety-three sanitary inspections have been made during the year.

Owing to the still high costs in the Building Trade it has been impracticable to get many improvements carried out.

Complaints were again received as to the condition of the drainage of houses at Fengate. It has been partly remedied by the owner.

Ten informal notices in addition to numerous letters have been served.

Water Supply.

The supply from the Peterborough Corporation Main has been well maintained.

Owing to the abnormally dry season the Corporation issued warning notices to take precautions against waste but up to the present there has been no need to cut off the supply at any time.

Although some wells have become dry and the water in many very low there has been no report that a village has been without water as has been the case in adjoining Districts.

At the time of writing the rain we have had has had little effect, but it is hoped the "Sock" will rise before the usual dry season or the outlook for the coming Autumn will be serious.

Werrington.

The extension of the Mains which was postponed for several years was completed in September at a cost of about £2,000. (Two Thousand Pounds).

A few of the more up-to-date owners have connected the supply to their houses.

In view of the many unfit wells, all the houses in the village ought to be connected without delay.

The quantity of water purchased during the year from the Peterborough Corporation was 1,183,000 gallons, an increase of 356,000 gallons over the year 1920.

Walton.

The quantity purchased during the year was 10,053,000 gallons a decrease of 3,432,000 gallons from the previous year and a decrease of 4,020,000 gallons from the year 1919.

Messrs. Brotherhood and Sage's Works consumed 4,879,000 gallons, a decrease of 4,669,000 gallons, leaving a nett consumption

for the Parish (exclusive of the Factories) of 5,174,000 gallons, an increase of 1,237,000 gallons from 1920.

The large decrease in Messrs. Brotherhood's consumption is due to the very small number of men employed.

The nett increase for the Parish is due to the shortage of soft water, the addition of 33 houses occupied during the year and to unemployment.

Peterborough Without.

The quantity of water purchased has been :—

Dogsthorpe	...	4,617,000 galls.	increase	209,000 galls.
Newark	...	1,155,000 „	„	196,000 „
Fengate	...	472,000 „	„	22,000 „
<hr/>				
Total	...	6,244,000 gallons.		
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An increase of 427,000 gallons.

The increase is due to the abnormally dry season and to the erection of 50 additional houses.

The Main in Paston Lane has been extended at a cost of £99. (Ninety-nine Pounds).

Longthorpe.

The quantity purchased has been 812,000 an increase of 237,000 gallons.

Eye, Gunthorpe and Paston.

The quantities purchased are :—

Eye	...	5,051,000 galls.	increase	1,620,000 galls.
Gunthorpe	...	691,000 „	„	56,000 „
Paston	...	35,000 „	„	12,000 „

Twenty houses in Paston take their supply through the Gunthorpe Meter.

The total quantity of water purchased from the Peterborough Corporation during the year has been 24,069,000 gallons, a decrease of 188,000 gallons.

The leak in the Peakirk bore has been stopped, but only time will show whether it is a permanent repair. The reduced pressure in the water bearing strata has been in its favour.

No samples of water have been submitted for Analysis.

A sample of water taken from a well at Gunthorpe (which undoubtedly contained oil) was submitted to the Council.

The well is situated far from all possible public sources of contamination, but I have heard indirectly that some considerable time previously, a cask of paraffin oil was wasted near it. I consider this a very feasible explanation, as the oil would float on the top of the water and would not be seen until, owing to the very dry season, the water became lower in the well and the oil level with the inlet of suction pipe.

Housing of the Working Classes.

The 32 houses at Walton commenced in March, 1920 have been completed and occupied at a cost of £995 15s. 0d. each.

Of the scheme for the 106 houses which were commenced November, 1920, 12 at Eye, 8 at Helpston, 14 at Werrington and 6 at Marholm have been completed and occupied, 10 at Ailsworth are nearing completion.

Owing to the continued high cost of building and the burden of Taxation, the Government have changed their policy and decided to cut down the Housing Programme.

It was proposed by the Council to delete 56 houses in this District.

The Contractor claimed a sum for compensation which was not accepted.

After several conferences and piles of correspondence it was, at the end of the year, agreed, and is now waiting for ratification, that the Contractor build 14 additional houses (6 Glinton, 4 Etton and 4 Maxey) and receive £25 per house for those not erected.

It will be remembered that in 1920 your officers endeavoured to persuade the Housing Commissioner to permit an alteration in the plans so as to lessen the cost and at the same time improve the bedrooms, but the proposal was negatived.

It is now pleasing to know that the Housing Department of the Ministry of Health has changed its views and has instructed us to carry out the above proposals, no doubt taking unto themselves the credit for the saving in cost.

Of the 50 houses being erected by the Peterborough Corporation in St. Paul's Road and Paston Lane, 30 have been erected and occupied. As the houses are completed they are at once occupied and there is a long waiting list.

The erection of the houses has to some extent relieved the shortage but has not in the least improved the present housing conditions or replaced a single one of the many bad and undesirable houses in the District.

New Buildings.

Plans have been deposited for houses as follows :—
Peakirk 5, Newark 1, against a total of 24 in 1920.

The 5 houses at Peakirk are converted Army Huts.

The houses erected during the year, including Housing Schemes are :—

Peterborough Without	30	Marholm	...	6	
Walton ...	...	32	Helpston	...	8
Eye ...	...	12	Peakirk	...	2
Werrington	...	14	Borough Fen	...	2
a total of 106 as against 31 in 1920.					

The houses in course of erection are :—

Peterborough Without	21	Borough Fen	... 8
Ailsworth	... 10	Peakirk	... 3

The Houses in Borough Fen are being erected for the County Council under the control of the Board of Agriculture.

Several plans have been submitted for additions to houses and for the erection of garages.

Two large Army Huts have been erected at Helpston and Castor to be used as Public Halls. The plan for the one at Castor was not at first approved because it was considered that the floor was not strong enough for a Public Hall. Strengthening timbers are being inserted.

The entrance porch has not been erected according to the plan submitted and I consider it very dangerous in the event of a panic.

Factories and Workshops.

At Messrs. Brotherhood's Works during the war, temporary urinals were erected. These and the oily waste from the power plants and cooling tank are connected to the surface water sewer and contaminate the Brook at Gunthorpe Bridge.

Slaughter Houses.

These have been periodically inspected and no complaints have been received.

Offensive Trades.

The Licensed premises occupied by Messrs. Henson & Sons and the Tan-yard at Fengate have not been used for some time.

Messrs. E. and W. Henson of Flag Fen made application for a Knacker's License and were requested to submit plans for alterations of the premises to make them fit for the purpose.

They have not proceeded with the matter.

Scavenging.

The collection of night soil from the pail closets at Castor and Ailsworth and that of house refuse at Walton is carried out by Contract and appears to be done satisfactorily.

The pail closets of 12 houses at Fengate are being emptied by the Peterborough Corporation Workmen.

The house refuse of the houses erected in Peterborough Without for the Peterborough Corporation is collected by the Corporation Dustmen and the cost charged to this Council.

I have endeavoured to secure a site for the disposal of the house refuse of Dogsthorpe and Garton End but have been unsuccessful.

Infectious Diseases.

The number of cases of infectious diseases dealt with by me and enumerated in the following table is 15 (as against 36 in 1920 and 30 in 1919) distributed as follows :—

Parish.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.
Walton ...	2	1
Gunthorpe ...	1	1
Castor ...	2	
Peterborough Without	4	
Werrington ...	2	
Northborough	1	
Helpston ...		1
Totals ...	12	3—15

This is the lowest number of cases since 1917 and 177 below the average for the previous 10 years. The numbers are :— 1911—61, 1912—28, 1913—32, 1914—42, 1915—38, 1916—28, 1917—9, 1918—23, 1919—30, 1920—36.

The two cases of Scarlet Fever at Walton were in one house.

Two of the cases of Scarlet Fever in Peterborough Without were in one house.

There were two cases of Scarlet Fever in 1916 in the same family as one this year but not in the same house.

The case of Diphtheria at Helpston was imported from Melton Mowbray.

A suspected case of Diphtheria at Sutton (although not notified as such) was removed to the Peterborough Isolation Hospital and the expenses defrayed privately.

Five cases were removed to the Peterborough Isolation Hospital at the expense of this Council.

Twelve houses have been disinfected. It was impracticable to disinfect one house owing to its structure.

Dairies and Cowsheds.

The milk supply is as reported in my previous Reports, owing to Rural Authorities having no power to control the business in the case of small suppliers.

Drainage and Sewage Disposal.

According to the approximate records I am able to keep the quantity of sewage pumped at Walton, Werrington and Dogsthorpe has increased in proportion to the additional houses connected.

The quantity pumped at Garton End has decreased.

Fifty-nine houses have been connected to the Sewer in Peterborough Without, 1 at Werrington and 32 at Walton.

The proposed sewer at Fengate is still in abeyance because the Peterborough Corporation have not yet carried out their alterations.

The temporary arrangement permitted when the 20 houses were erected in Mountsteven Avenue, has now failed. To prevent a nuisance adjacent to the houses, the drains have been connected to a surface water sewer which discharges into a Public water course which is connected to the Newborough water supply.

In 1914 about £15,000 was spent to decrease the pollution of this stream.

Plans have been prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Health for a Trunk Sewer to drain the above houses and the Parish of Gunthorpe and although Gunthorpe is badly drained and contributes to the contamination of the above stream, the matter has been shelved.

Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909.

Nothing has been done under this Act during the year.

It would be farcical to make closing orders that cannot be enforced because of the present shortage of houses and of the impossibility of replacing the defective ones.

The question of repairs from the Owners' point of view is, owing to high cost and low rents, economically impossible and the Council are not yet willing to exercise their power to execute the work themselves.

I am,

Sir, and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

G. A. PENWILL.

February, 1922.